

5 CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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- 10      1. A digital signature method for a network infrastructure copy protection system, comprising the steps of:
- a) applying a digital signature to a digital content file;
  - b) transmitting the content file across a distributed computer network;
  - c) examining the content file to determine whether the content file includes the digital signature, the examining performed within the distributed
  - 15      computer network;
  - d) transmitting the content file when the content file includes the digital signature; and
  - e) blocking transmission of the content file when the content file does not include the digital signature.
  - 20      2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the digital signature is configured to identify the sender of the digital content file.
  - 25      3. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of logging the digital signature applied to the content file within the distributed computer network when the content file is transmitted across the distributed computer network.
  - 30      4. The method of Claim 1 wherein the distributed computer network is the Internet.

5           5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the examining is performed by a plurality of routers within the distributed computer network.

          6. The method of Claim 1 wherein the examining is performed by a plurality of cache engines within the distributed computer network.

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          7. A restricted data format method for a network infrastructure copy protection system, comprising the steps of:

          a) receiving a digital content file for transmission across a distributed computer network;

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          b) examining the content file to determine whether the content file includes a restricted data format, the examining performed within the distributed computer network;

          c) transmitting the content file when the content file does not include the restricted data format; and

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          d) blocking transmission of the content file when the content file does include the restricted data format.

          8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the restricted data format includes MP3 data formats.

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          9. The method of Claim 7 wherein the restricted data format includes MPEG video data formats.

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          10. The method of Claim 7 wherein the restricted data format includes Word Document formats.

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5            11. The method of Claim 7 wherein the distributed computer network is the Internet.

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12. The method of Claim 7 wherein the examining is performed by a plurality of routers within the distributed computer network.

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13. The method of Claim 7 wherein the examining is performed by a plurality of cache engines within the distributed computer network.

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